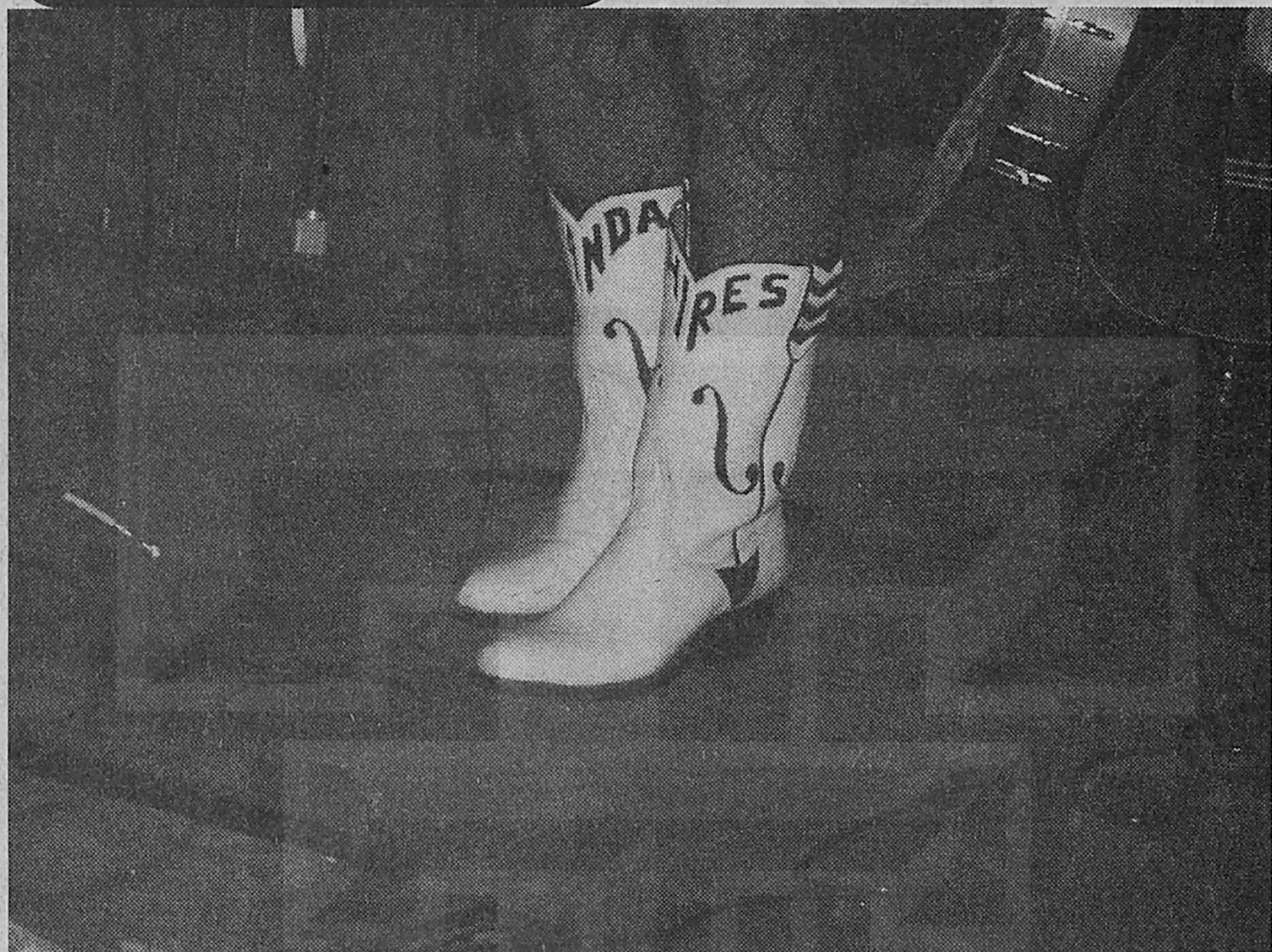


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BEST BOOTS



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NotSXSW 2012

JOHN THE REVEALATOR

FREEFORM AMERICAN ROOTS

#152

ROOTS BIRTHS & DEATHS

REVIEWS *** (or not)**

Audrey Auld

Katya Chornover

Karen Collins

& The Backroads Band

Ray Wylie Hubbard

Paul Metsa

Some Velvet Evening

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DURING MARCH 2012

#1 RAY WYLIE HUBBARD: THE GRIFTER'S HYMNAL

(Bordello) *CTS/*JM/*JP/*RS/*SC/*TG/*TJ

- 2 Karen Collins & The Backroads Band: No Yodeling On The Radio
(Azalea City) *CP/*DA/*GS/*JW/*MB/*MN
- 3 Tom Armstrong: Wine Stained Heart (Carswell)
*BL/*BR/*KF/*PP/*SH/*TS
- 4 I See Hawks In LA: New Kind Of Lonely (Westerns Seeds)
*AA/*EE/*EW/*GF
- 5 Justin Townes Earle: Nothing's Gonna Change The Way That
I Feel About You (Bloodshot) *BF/*FS/*KC/*RF
- 6 Darrell Scott: Long Ride Home (Full Light) *BS/*KR
- 7 Moot Davis: Man About Town (Highway Kind)
*ATC/*DWB/*MI/*OO/*PGS
- 8 Cornell Hurd Band: Drop In On My Dream (Behemoth) *LB/*TR
- 9 Halden Wofford & The Hi-Beams: Live At Hodi's (self) *LG/*TM
- 10 Beth McKee: Next To Nowhere (Swampgirl) *TPR
- 11 Katya Chorover: Big Big Love (self) *AB
- 12 Audrey Auld: Resurrection Moon (Reckless) *MDT
- 13 New Country Rehab (self) *BP/*MO
- 14 Kevin Gordon: Gloryland (Crowville) *GM
- 15- Lyle Lovett: Release Me (Curb/Lost Highway) *N&T
Lucero: Women & Work (ATO)
- 16 Jason Arnold & The Stepsiders: Crazy Things (self) *MM
- 17 JWW & The Prospectors: It's High Past Time (self)
- 18- Rose Cousins: We Have Made a Spark (Outside Music) *JR/*SR
Yarn: Almost Home (Ardsley) *DS
- 19 Drew Nelson: Hit A Whiff (Red House) *MW
- 20 Johnny Cash: Bootleg Vol IV; The Soul Of Truth (Columbia)
*RH
- 21 Todd Snider: Agnostic Hymns & Stoner Fables (Aimless) *WR
- 22- Lincoln Durham: The Shovel Vs Howling Bones (self) *SS
Amy Francis: Balladacious (Cherry Ridge) *MT
Otis Gibbs: Harder Than Hammered Hell (Wannamaker)
Joan Osborne: Bring It On Home (Saguaro Road) *AG
- 23- The Chieftains: Voice Of Ages (Hear Music) *TA
Chuck Prophet: Temple Beautiful (Yep Roc) *RC
Tommy Womack: Now What! (Cedar Creek)
- 24- Chuck Mead & His Grassy Knoll Boys:
Back At The Quonset Hut (Ramseur)
Sons Of Bill: Sirens (Gray Fox)
The Steel Wheels: Lay Down Lay Low (self)
Truckstop Honeymoon: Steamboat In A Cornfield (self) *DG
- 25 Gretchen Peters: Hello Cruel World (Scarlet Letter)



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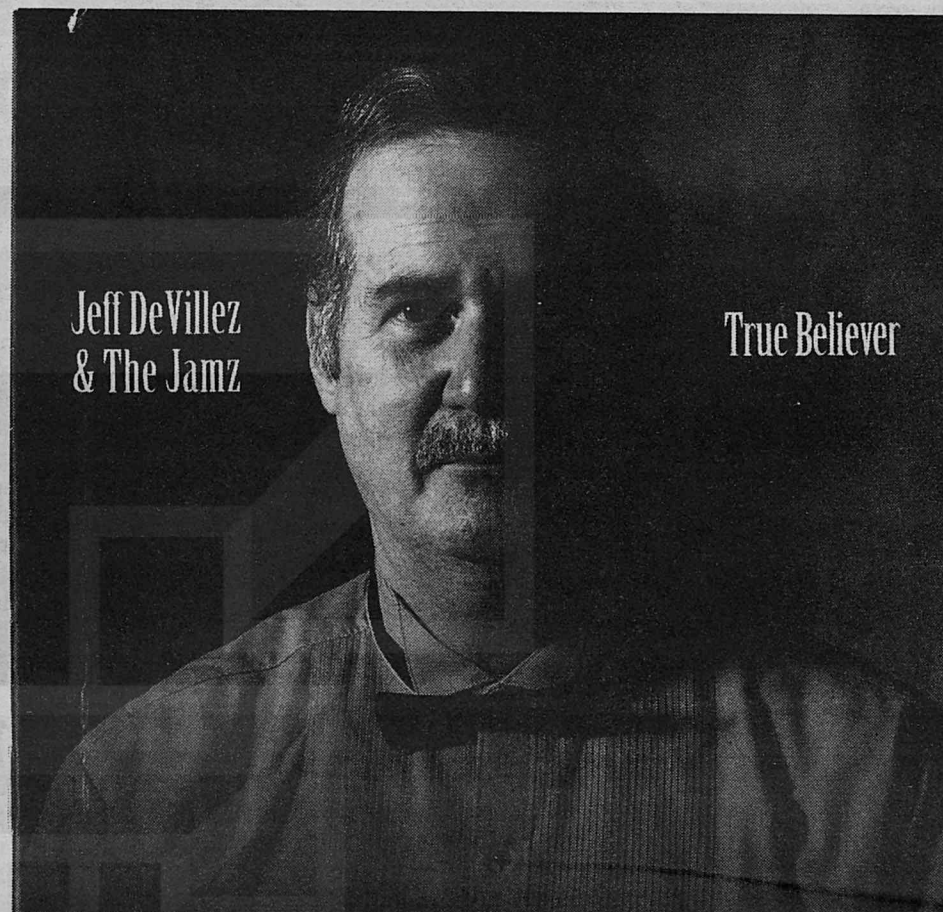
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RAY WYLIE HUBBARD • The Grifter's Manual

(Bordello *****)

Normally, at 65, you expect the fire and brimstone to tamper down a bit, but Ray Wylie doesn't seem to have got the memo. Each album, at least since **Eternal & Lowdown** (Rounder, 2001), has been grittier, greasier, swampier and, well, just more Hubbard-y than the last. Whether, as with Guy Clark, cowriting is a sign of aging, and this album has three cowrites, one with Liz Foster of The Trishas, which is two more than the previous four (not counting a contractual obligation) put together, Hubbard shows no sign of slowing down. As a general thing, I'd advise sticking with Gurf Morlix, but bassplayer George Reiff, who leaves himself off five of the 12 tracks, very unusual for a musician/producer, takes Hubbard's musical vision and runs with it, stripping every track down to rock & roll basics. One small problem is that the sound can tend to dominate the lyrics and the digipak doesn't offer lyrics, only credits, Lucas Hubbard or Billy Cassis electric guitars, Rick Richards drums/percussion (including bird feeder on one track), Audley Freed mandolin/12-string guitar, Reiff bass and Hubbard acoustic and slide guitars, resonator, tambourine, harmonica, though only Hubbard and Richards are on every track, plus Ian McLagan piano on one track and Ringo Starr joining in (long distance) on his *Coochy Coochy*, the only cover (don't ask me why). Still, if you have to strain a little to get Hubbard's heaven, hell and places in between lyrics, is there anyone else who could come up with a line like "He couldn't commit wholly to the devil's side. His ink reads 6-6-5.9." **JC**

KAREN COLLINS & THE BACKROADS BAND No Yodeling On The Radio

(Azalea City *****)

First thing you notice about Collins is not so much her voice as her delivery—pure, authentic honky tonk. She's been compared to Loretta Lynn and Hazel Dickens, but I'm thinking the timbre of Kay Adams, though not so much her hardcore material (Adams' best album was called **Alcohol & Tears**, I think you get the picture). A gen-u-ine Virginia coalminer's daughter, Collins, with that slightly gaunt Appalachian look, fronts a Washington, DC, band, featuring spot on guitarist Ira Gitlin, that plays classic country, as Don Walser used to say, "Top 40 hits—from 40 years ago," but Collins also writes material that fits right in (though I'm not sure about the Visa reference). Seven of the 12 numbers are originals, the title track cowritten with Arty Hill, and while I'm not crazy about *Blindsided* with its Texas stereotyping, she hits her stride with the remarkable *She Dreams* and keeps 'em coming. Bassplayer Geff King wrote the instrumental *That There Boogie*, sings *Mama's In A Honky Tonk* and he and Collins duet his *Parallel Lines*, the covers being *Too Much Me*, *Not Enough You* by Brian McGuire of 52 Pickups and Pretty Miss Norma Jean's *I'm A Walking Advertisement (For The Blues)*. **JC**

AUDREY AULD • Resurrection Moon

(Reckless *****)

It surprised when this came hot(ish) on the heels of her **Come Find Me** (Reckless, 2011), but while Auld doesn't bill it as such, this is sort of a Greatest Hits collection, no less than 20 tracks, five each from **Lost Men & Angry Girls** (Reckless, 2000) and **Losing Faith** (Reckless, 2003), four each from **The Fallen** (Reckless, 2000) and **Texas** (Reckless, 2005), plus two new recordings, with Anne McCue, including the title track. Raised in Tasmania (and I have to admire anyone who can work Tasmania into a song), Auld first came to my attention when she and Bill Chambers, as Bill & Audrey, released a stunning album of country duets, **Looking Back To See** (Reckless 1999), but she then went solo and moved to California, but, though now an American citizen living in Nashville, Auld holds to her Australian identity, even if *Half A World Away*. So she writes about a somewhat different country, an outsider space that only she occupies, and sings with a different accent, whether being deadly serious, as on *Hole In My Life* ("where my brother used to be"), or wildly funny, as on *I'd Leave Me Too* or *Next Big Nothing*. The only problem with Auld is trying to decide if she's more remarkable as a singer or a songwriter, which isn't the worst problem an artist can have. **JC**



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PAUL METSA • Blue Guitar Highway

(University of Minnesota Press, cloth *****)

Minneapolis isn't like Austin, for one thing, Minnesota has winters like Texas has summers. Suomi-American Metsa remarks that Finns settled there because it reminded them of home, "lakes, birch trees and nine feet of freakin' snow most of the year." For another thing, musicians of all kinds can make a decent living there. Singer-songwriter Metsa admits that this is both a blessing and a curse, you work steadily but nobody outside the Twin Cities knows about it and of the local icons he mentions, the only ones I've heard of are people who moved there from places better known as music centers, such as New Orleans, San Francisco and, yes, Austin. As a general thing, I don't have much use for musicians' autobiographies, but Metsa's is a gritty, upbeat, well-paced and very readable account of the life of a man who's played over 5,000 gigs. It can hardly be called a sub-text as David Carr spells it out in his splendid Foreword, 'A Tough Gig But It Beats Working,' that, at the end of the day, musicians have more control over their lives, if not destinies, than the people in the audience. Metsa basically illustrates this concept with a rollercoaster ride through the highs and lows of his 35 year career, ironically published by the same institution that turned him down for its music school—"We strongly recommend that you find another field of study." With a keen sense of the absurd, a firm handle on his place in the great scheme of things ("one of the upsides of obscurity is that you never go out of style"), flashes of poetry and self-deprecating humor, Metsa looks back on triumphs and humiliations alike with no regrets, though he does admit that his current bookstore and library gigs, reading to attentive audiences, are a nice change of pace. **JC**

KATYA CHOROVER • Big Big Love

(self *****)

Every time I see someone reading the Last Rites over the CD, I wonder what that stuff in my mailbox is. Irish mist? A measure of how far behind I am is that Chorover, whose country/Americana album practically defines 'What's Not To Like?', has been in a holding pattern for months. Blessed with a huge contralto, Chorover doesn't just have power and range to spare, her voice is wonderfully expressive, brimming with emotional depth, as are her nine originals, particularly *Movin' On* and *Little Bird*. She even scores points with her covers, Townes Van Zandt's rarely recorded *Brother Flower*, and Ewan McColl's *Dirty Old Town* (which Van Zandt himself also covered). On top of all this, she's superbly served by producer Casey Neill, who delivers a crisp, wide open spaces sound behind her. I know nothing about Portland's A-list musicians, but will happily take the one-sheet's word for it that these handpicked musos are the cream of the local crop. **JC**

SOME VELVET EVENING • No Law Against Talking

(self *****)

First off, I owe an apology to Brennen Leigh & Jesse Dayton, my excuse being that their country duets album, **Holdin' Our Own** (Stag, 2007), was a one-off rather than an ongoing project. However, after reviewing My Darling Clementine's **How Do You Plead?** (Drumfire [UK]) last month, further digging around YouTube turned up *Shooting The Breeze*, Apart from their video being a marvelous pastiche of a period TV hayride show, Carrie Shepard & John Holk, from the Detroit Honky Tonk scene (who knew?), prove that there are at least two actual Americans who can sing country duets really well. Not only that, but write them too, with nine originals alongside The Delmore Brothers' *Southern Moon* and Ritchie Valens' *Come On, Let's Go*. I'm not crazy about the name, presumably a play on Lee Hazlewood's *Some Velvet Morning*, but anybody who reminds me so strongly of The Kendalls, especially when they have the same speciality—slippin' around—can call themselves anything they like. While Shepard sings harmonies with John Holk & The Sequins, here, like Jeannie Kendall, she takes the leads, with Holk as her Royce, and while it isn't all about cheating, the standouts, like the suggestive standout *Chore List*, *One Night Of Sin* and *Behind The Line* are all about cheating. **JC**

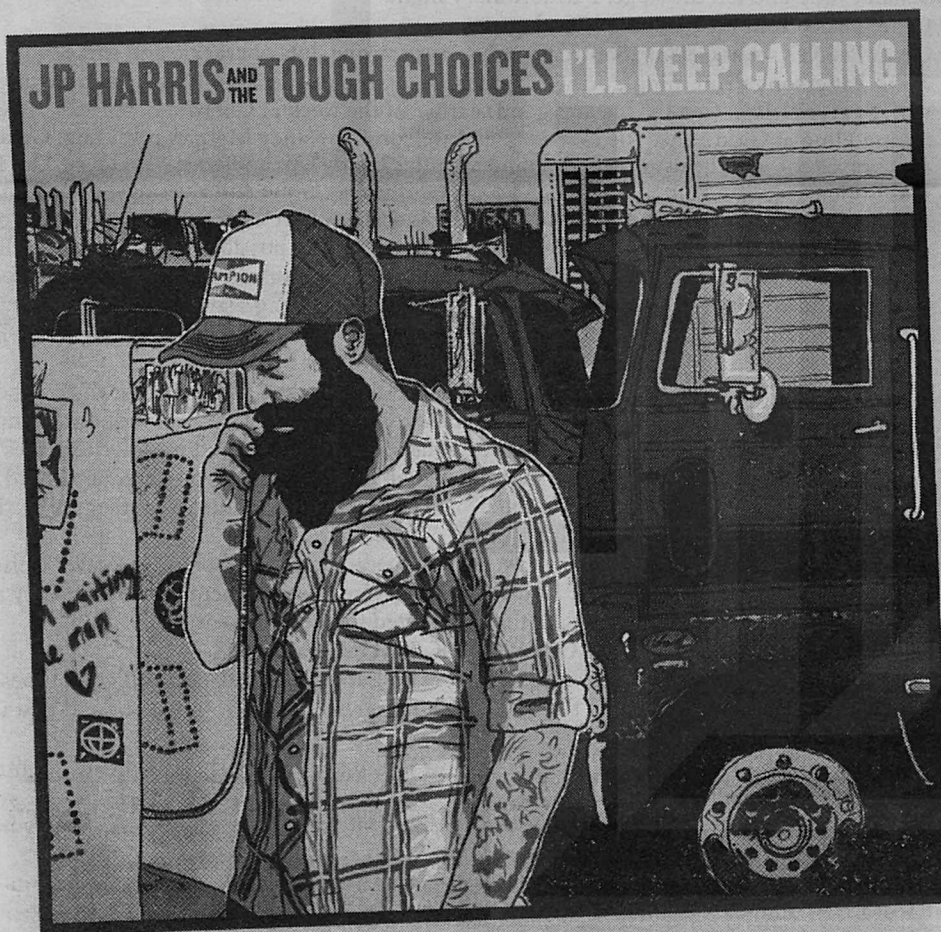
VA: New Multitudes

(Rounder ***)

Since 1995, Nora Guthrie has been inviting musicians to take a crack at the thousands of songs her father left in his notebooks. Some, such as The Klezmatics, were rather left field, but none of them inspired quite the degree of dire foreboding as what Rounder calls "a dream team of Americana torchbearers: Jay Farrar (Son Volt), Will Johnson (Centromatic), Anders Parker (Vernaline) and Yim Yames (My Morning Jacket)." The problem, admittedly a damned difficult one, is to make Guthrie's songs sound contemporary while still being unmistakably his, something Billy Bragg was able to do, while everyone else simply covers them in their own style. Of course, this may work for Son Volt, Centromatic, Vernaline and My Morning Jacket fans, but it leaves me cold. **JC**

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Giddy Ups Spring Fling 2012

A big huge thank you to each and every musician that graced 'the biggest little stage in South Austin.' Hank & Shaidri Alrich kicked off this event followed by Jon Byrd, David Olney, The Far West, Jason Arnold & The Stepsiders, Amanda Percy, Roy Heinrich & The Pickups, Mike Stinson, Arty Hill & The Pearl Dusters with the one and only Bill Kirchen closing the show on Thursday. WOW!

Halley Anna Finlay & Ashley Monical started our Friday All Women showcase, followed by New Mystery Girl, Janine Wilson, Karen Collins & The Backroads Band, Penny Jo Pullus, Mary Battiatia, Ruthie & The Wranglers, Miss Leslie & Her Juke Jointers, Teri Joyce & The Tagalongs, Bianca DeLeon, Cass Brostad and closing the evening Ruby Dee & The Snakehandlers. I hope all of you girls got your T-Shirts and thank you for making this showcase a fun time. I believe women musicians need more acknowledgement and exposure of their art and I try to do this when I can. Thank you girls.

Saturday was Cow Island's 2nd Annual Spring Roundup beginning with The Defibulators that helped set the pace at noon followed by Karen Collins & The Backroads Band, The Flying Armadillos, Libbi Bosworth who is newly engaged to a good friend of mine, Teri Joyce & The Tagalongs—expanded to include Dave Gonzalez, Rosie Flores, Susana Van Tassel and Caroline Casey, Stone River Boys, JP Harris & Tough Choices and Mike Stinson. John Conquest invited Cass Brostadt, Jon Byrd, Beth Lee and Billy Eli Band to close with a fantastic set.

Sunday was our 'Home Family' showcase featuring some of the musicians who grace our little stage often. Dr. Vodka & OJ warmed us in the morning with sweet melodies, Jackie Broz Farmer with her daughter Carly and Jerry Don Motley, the one and only 'Gringo Dewey,' Dewey Lyon, smooth and easy Patty Finney, George Knaak with son Will Knaak accompanying him on piano, Bob Appel, Biscuit Grabbers with Matt Thomas & Huck Johnson, 'Lost' John Casner with the one and only Pete Mitchell, The Redneck Boys, and Roadhouse Rockers closing the finale showcase.

I want to thank John Conquest of 3rd Coast Music for his hours and hours of patience and time in putting together this wonderful showcase for Giddy Ups—thank you truly John. Your dedication to live music and support of live music is appreciated by so many that have known you over the years.

Cow Island Music with Bill Hunt—thank you for asking us to host your Annual Spring Roundup with the great artists you have. It is always a pleasure and an honor to have you walk thru the doors at Giddy Ups, thank you Bill. It was some fun we had with your killer lineup.

I want to thank some of the folks that always work behind the scenes to help me host this Spring Fling Music Festival. Greg Duffy, what can I say, you did a superb job at the sound board and really made each and every musician sound the very best with their art. Your hours of organizing, double checking cords and mics and testing all equipment prior to the kick off, reviewing last year notes, keeping meticulous notes on each act makes everyone's job easier each year and your dedication to live music is apparent.

Carlton Pike for welcoming all of the musicians as they arrived, preparing the stage and informing Greg what was needed for sound. You did a great job.

My staff of bartenders, Dawn, Renita, Rachael, Meg, Mike Morgan for keeping coolers stocked, taking out trash and loving his crazy Mom. I truly have the very best staff of any bar in Austin, they work hard, take pride in their work and are professionals in every aspect of my needs and of our customer and patrons needs. Thank you for all that you do to make Giddy Ups a great music venue and a True Texas Honky Tonk, where we always "welcome good friends & good times" every day, and create friends for life.

And last but not least, I will always be grateful to Michael Uhlmann for doing the very first Music Showcase in 2008—at that time we called it 'South by So What' as we did not want to participate in the politics of charging money to see great music and where the money charged did not go to the musicians that made the event possible. We do not participate in politics with musicians at Giddy Ups.

The next year it was changed to Giddy Ups Spring Fling Music Festival. We love music and I appreciate all of the musicians that have helped over the years to make Giddy Ups proud to have 'the biggest little stage in South Austin.' Thank you truly, many blessings.

Nancy Morgan

LOOKING BACK ON NotSXSW 2012

LOUISE KIRCHEN (Austin, TX)

I'll bet I'm not alone in saying the fabulous Carper Family was a standout favorite for me this year at G&S. Bill and I sat up front and drank in their perfect harmonies like the cool, clear water they were singing about.

I also raved on to everyone I met about Brennan Leigh's stellar closing set Sat nite at the Highball, well worth waiting for! Teri Joyce amazed me earlier that evening with how easily her vocals seemed to really take off and get in the groove with her uptempo tunes. I thought Mike Stinson was better than ever at Giddyups, and continue to be a fan of his writing and presentation.

One of those 'special moment' highlights for me at G&S was Bill being called up to sit in on guitar with Susan Cowsill, while he was still wiping away tears from having just heard her song I Don't Want To Leave This Earth.

On the minus side, all I can say in general about some other acts during NotSXSW that didn't thrill me, was hearing now and again another wonky tonk wannabe sounding as if they woke up yesterday mornin' with an unexplained hankerin' to write themselves a country song. But maybe that comment could apply to most of us! Karen Collins on the other hand has a great honky tonk voice and uses the style well, writing entertaining original songs in the classic country vein that don't come off as clichés. I also love the singing and songwriting of Teresa Neal.

MARY BATTIATA (Arlington, VA)

My high, by a mile: the Saturday night double bill at G&S of **Blaze Foley: Duct Tape Messiah** and Gurf Morlix's set of songs from **Blaze Foley's 113th Wet Dream**. The film we saw was the one-hour version; a 90-minute alternate cut is available on CD Baby. But I wouldn't know about running times. I got sucked in at the opening credits and forgot about time until Gurf said, "Thank you," and left the stage. Extraordinary night.

Other peaks from my personal Himalaya:

Grant People's set at G&S on Saturday night—very strong, lots of crackle and shine.

Mark Patterson's drumming during Michael Fracasso's excellent set (G&S, Saturday night) and with Beaver Nelson (new to me and good) earlier in the week at Guero's.

Spring Fling at Giddy Ups, the ever-cool and welcoming Nancy Morgan presiding. Great sound (thanks, Greg), and the usual generous and attentive Giddy Ups audience. Teri Joyce, Lisa Morales and Ruthie Logsdon all had fine sets. Lisa Morales—new to me and riveting—transfixing voice, major duende. Teri's set was tight and great - and she wasn't even working with her regulars. Ruthie sang so well, this after taking one of the worst hits possible just a month earlier—the sudden loss of her partner, guitarist Phil Mathieu. She was a study in grace and the transformative power of music making. The Spring Fling is a Good Thing. Long may it rock.

Bill Kirchen and friends at Evangeline's late Friday night. Seeing him in a small venue like that reminds all over again what an elegant and rocking monster he is.

Various venue notes: Grant Peeples saved the day for me, and I'm guessing most others who played Amelia's, with the little Roland PA that he generously set up on Wednesday and left in place for the rest of the week. Amelia's garden stage is a jewel—one of my favorite places to play. Re G&S—the sound was stellar, the sound guys remarkable, thank you, Jared and Brad. I liked this year's new, all-indoor set up very much. Yes, I missed the scorching sun, the pollen, the heat, wind and humidity. But I'll live with it.

Finally, seen at Guero's: Two women sitting side-by-side at a picnic table after Beaver Nelson's set, looking over the **3rd Coast Music Fauxcabulary** feature. New to them, obviously. They actually were knocking hands and chortling as they competed to point to favorites.

OBIE OBERMARK, KNON, Dallas, TX

New to me and Wonderful: Shovels & Rope tore up Lucy's! Great energy and good tunes.

Joy Kills Sorrow reminded me of the best of the 'newgrass' bands from the 80s and that is a very good thing

JP Harris & The Tough Choices, the newest Cow Island artist, brought straight-up country at it's best... flippin' wonderful.

Deadman: good tunes, outstanding dynamics, excellent players, rich harmonies—they had it all working and we loved it

Mike Stinson was so much better than two years ago that he was like a whole new act!

Favorite set: Shinyribs at Sam's Town Point

Most missed: Yvette Landry.

Biggest disappointment: the mess of obnoxious distortion that resulted when Alejandro Escovedo grossly over-drove the PA at Lucy's. Unintelligible and unpleasant, equipment abuse ain't great art.

Cooler fan: Jan Pedersen who had traveled (again) from the west coast of Norway—his excellent musical taste is exceeded only by his zeal—most years he attends more Texas festivals than I do. Now that's a fan.

photos by Dana Lynne Stringer

Jim Stringer

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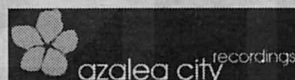


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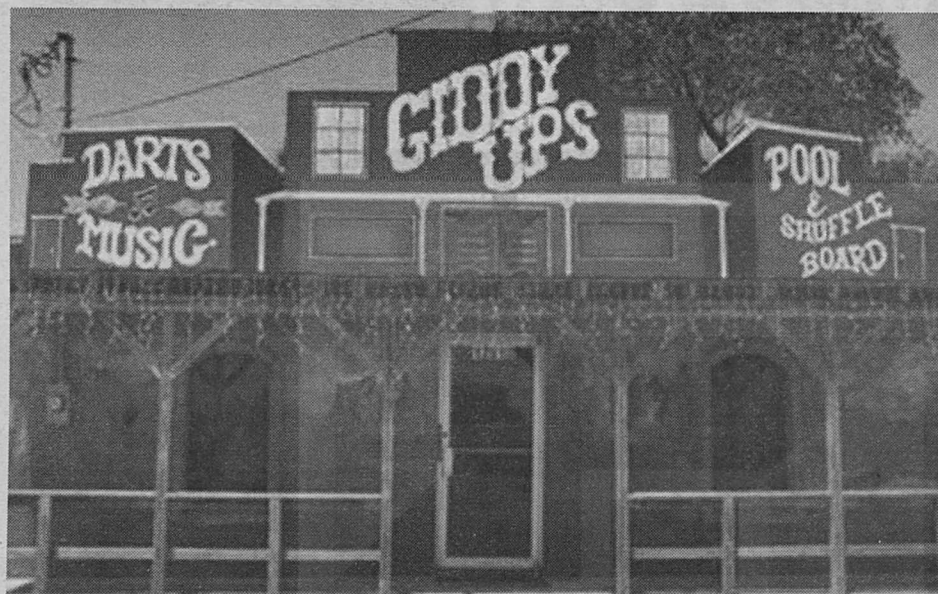
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 (May 29, George Ensle)



Adam Carroll



Hank & Shaidri Alrich and Don Sanders
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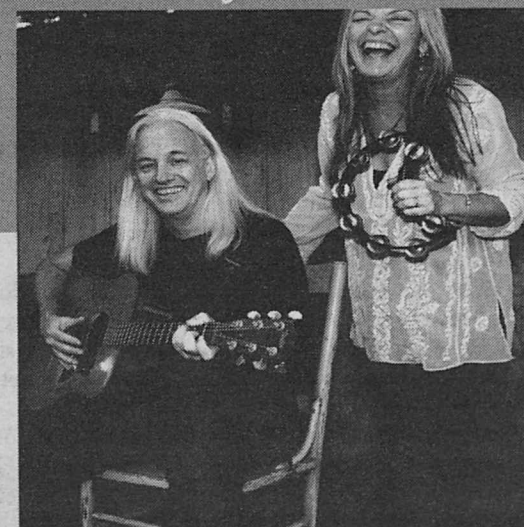
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JOHN THE REVEALATOR

Simply not paying attention. I cut and paste the FAR reporters' emails and the first one to include The Chieftains' new album, **Voice Of Ages**, listed it as *Pretty Little Girl*, which is one of the songs on it. Subsequent reports got the title right but I didn't spot the difference.

- So it's not just Austin, William Michael Smith of the *Houston Press* sent me a story about **Shawn Bermudez**, owner of a popular Montrose nightspot, being arrested and booked at the central jail when HDP officers responded to a noise complaint. "Eyewitnesses who requested anonymity told Rocks Off that it is widely believed in the immediate locale that a single neighbor may be the source of the noise complaints... Bermudez noted that the club only began having complaints in January of this year, which suggests that [they] may be coming from a new property owner in the area." That sounds all too familiar.

- Also in Houston, a karaoke singer was shot dead while singing Los Tigres Del Norte's *Somas Mas Americanos* ("I want to remind the gringos: I didn't cross the border, the border crossed me"). Seems the singer announced that he was from Guerrero, Mexico, and this fact and/or the song choice resulted in his being shot in the head without warning. Seems **karaoke** singing can be dangerous to your health. In 2008, a Malaysian at a coffee shop hogged the karaoke microphone so long he was stabbed to death by other patrons. In 2010, *The New York Times* reported on the 'My Way Killings' in The Philippines, a phenomenon which takes its name from a string of deadly assaults on people singing *My Way*, which is now banned in many bars. *Even though I loathe the song, shooting eight people dead after enduring countless versions of John Denver's Take Me Home, Country Roads* at a neighborhood bar in Thailand seems a tad excessive, but I'm rather with the Seattle woman who attacked a man singing Coldplay's *Yellow*.

- Announcing the vinyl release of Lyle Lovett's **Release Me**, Lost Highway gushed, "This is the first time we've had an LP pressed by the fine folks at Quality Record Pressing/Acoustic Sounds & it has truly blown our minds—probably the best sounding record we've ever made! This package, all housed in a gatefold sleeve is a true audiophile's dream." An unusual admission by a record label that CDs really are inferior to LPs.

- In a recent *LA Times* interview, **Lyle Lovett** was quoted as saying: "Writing is difficult. Actually, I like to say that writing is easy; it's having a good idea to write about that's difficult. But it's really hard having something to say that means something." Well, you kind of know what's he's trying to say, maybe, but I remember him being a lot more incisive in 1986.

- Among the equipment available at G&S were "**buttkickers**," which I thought had something to do with drums. However, **Bob Livingston** tells me, "Buttkickers are big ol' ex-UT football players that stand on either side of the stage. If someone talks while I'm playing they get their butt kicked..."

- Better late than never I guess, but I can't help noticing that most of the stories about **Connie Smith** being inducted into the Country Music Hall Of Fame left out the bit about being recognized in the 'Veterans Era Artist' category. In other words, it's taken the CMA 45 years to acknowledge the woman of whom Dolly Parton once said, "There's really only three real female singers in the world.

Streisand, Ronstadt and Connie Smith. The rest of us are only pretending."

- Have to admit that I'd never heard of the **WOW** series, annual compilations of contemporary Christian music, indeed I had no idea that EMI even had a Christian Music Group, but apparently there are now two albums featuring a total of 25 **GLBT Christian** artists. Producer Shawn Thomas says, "I'm often asked, 'Why aren't there more GLBT Christian artists out there?'" However, Thomas himself suggests an answer to this question in his book **Unashamed: Coming Out Of The Second Closet**, "which deals with the difficulty of being both gay and Christian in a world where GLBT persons have often been disaffiliated by churches and many 'gay Christians' find themselves ostracized by the GLBT community for holding strong to their faith." Sounds like the worst of both worlds.

- Great article by *Oakland Tribune's* Jim Harrington about **Lady Antebellum's** debacle in San Jose when the platform that was supposed to lift them dramatically to the stage got stuck and the trio had to make an undignified scramble out of the pit. Got to love it when something totally unnecessary malfunctions, but Harrington, who comments, "Lady Antebellum is the band for people who think Taylor Swift is just too darn country," said, "A much bigger problem than the technical difficulty, however, was that the trio wasn't all that impressive once it finally made it onto the stage. The harmonies and other vocal exchanges from Scott and Kelley—allegedly Lady A's greatest selling point—were ordinary at best." Noting that the group did best with The Doobie Brothers' *Black Water*, The Allman Brothers' *Midnight Rider* and Aerosmith's *Sweet Emotion*, Harrington concluded, "Classic rock reigns supreme at a country music show? Welcome to the 21st century."

- About the only country music blog I check on any kind of regular basis is **Countrycalifornia.com**, mainly because I love their 'Fake News' section, which recently covered 'Country Radio Seminar,' "Country Radio Programmers Converge on Nashville to Plot Destruction of Genre." I'm tempted to quote the whole thing, but I'll hold it down to the "informational lectures:"

"Country Music: 1995 to Present—a crash course in country music for recently defected Top 40 DJs.

Payola: Only Illegal If You're Really Obvious About It—circumventing antiquated pay-for-play laws.

Over 40? Not On My Airwaves, Buddy!—studies show that young people can't relate to old people.

Website Design: Party Like It's 1998—all the basics of designing a station website, from pairing eye-assaulting bright text colors with white backgrounds to adding so many blinking banners that the page won't load properly

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101 Clever Answers to the Question "How Do You Sleep at Night?"

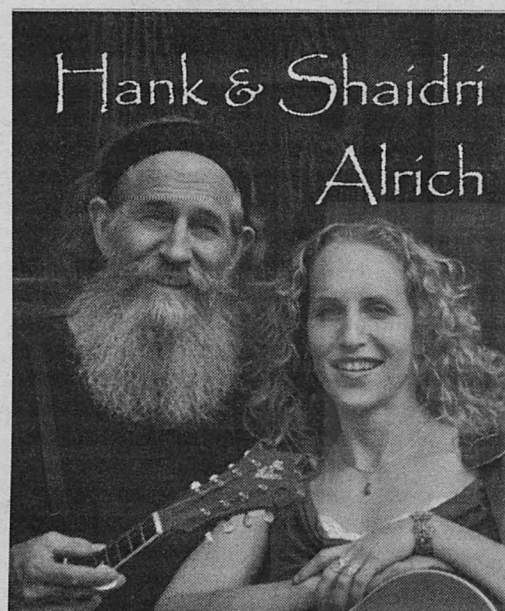
Jack Ingram, at the convention to record 'liners' and interviews for visiting stations, said: "It's great to be able to catch up with all these folks while they're in town and kiss some ass... I mean, develop some relationships. I've already had, like, ten stations promise to spin *Seeings Stars* if I throw them some autographed swag, so, all in all, not a bad night so far... Wait, this isn't on the record, is it?"

- Thought I got my fair share of what Bruce Price, *Texas Renegade Radio*, KNON, Dallas, described as "goofy PR shit," but I missed out on this one. Bruce commented, "Some things make you just go 'what the fuck' sometimes, ya know? For instance when reading the one-sheet for a new CD from someone named **Melody Walker** one comes across the following 'descriptive' phrases: 'Her powerful voice—something like honey crackling with gold dust, laid over a smoldering campfire.'" What does that mean? Have you ever seen honey with gold dust on it? Does it really crackle? How does it taste inside a sopapilla? And what does a smoldering campfire possibly have to do with a voice? Then later on you are informed that the recording site is a historic general store in California where the 'sounds of brick, rafters... waft in the background.' Really? I've never heard a brick or a rafter make a single noise in my life conducive to making music, have you? I used to work in construction in my teens and all brick & rafters ever said to me was 'you better go to school, boy, unless you want to keep picking up my heavy ass for the rest of your miserable life.' Yet here they not only provide sounds, but sounds that waft!!! I wonder how much people charge to come up with this shit? I couldn't do any worse! Possibly a new career!!"

- In the February issue.. I mentioned **Caroline Gnagy's** International Country Music Conference presentation on Tom Cook (Elizabeth Cook's father) as actually sounding quite interesting. I didn't mention that she's from Austin, and now it turns that I actually know her (slightly), but as **Caroline Casey** of The Stringslingers and The Casey Sisters.. In a thank you email, Casey/Gnaggy remarks, "Regarding your view of ICMC in general, I can totally see how the topics, as announced, appear ludicrous; I thought so too, before I first attended. But in person, I realized that these are serious and valid topics, expertly laid forth by esteemed (but not always stuffy) academics who want to have a little fun with the titles of their papers; they are almost never what they appear to be by title alone. The conference has been going on in one form or another for nearly 25 years, so I guess the repeat presenters don't wish to sound repetitive in their topics. You should attend sometime! I promise it won't be boring. I must say, it's been an interesting experience, going from a direct participant in the Austin music scene to an academic setting in Nashville, but it's exhilarating as well to try and state my own analyses in front of those guys." Well, darn it, Caroline, you just ruined my favorite standing source of humor.

- After dumping a fairly amount of NotSXSW info on **austinmetro.com** (the response was "Thanks. I think"), I went to the website and they'd not only incorporated it into their humungous database but ran a banner saying "Thanks to John Conquest & The Staff of **3rd Coast Music**." I take this to be a reference to Stokeley, Grommit and Niblet, the no account hounds who protect me from vengeful musos.

- Think I've found the male **Terri Hendrix**. After NotSXSW, I was pleased to get a handwritten note from Terri, but not surprised because that's what she does. The fact that she's universally adored by music writers and DJs is pure coincidence. Later, however, I got another handwritten note of appreciation, this one from **Andy Friedman**. They say New Yorkers are rude and obnoxious (though not, in my experience, if they live in Brooklyn), but Friedman proves that one of them at least has class.



*...what can I say that adequately
conveys the beauty of her leads
and harmonies?*

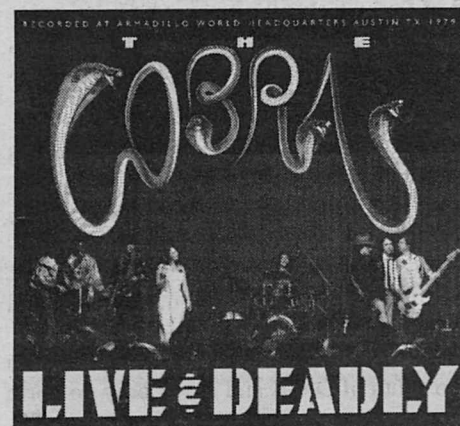
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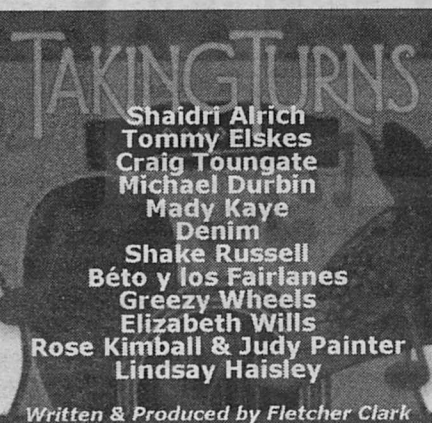
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REVIEWS CODE

***** Killer

***** What's not to like? *** Can do better

** Why did they bother? * Piss on this noise

THE DEMON OF ELECTRICITY

By and large, our adaptation to Austin's noise ordinance went pretty well. Some bleed between the two rooms at G&S Lounge was a small price to pay considering the alternative—canceling half the acts. I didn't exactly pray for rain, but a shower or two wouldn't have broken my heart.

Where we did run into a problem, which I didn't see coming, was making Amelia's all-acoustic. Turned out it wasn't total as Grant Peeples lent Amelia's his Roland two channel speaker and a Rhode condenser microphone. Whether this generous, last minute, gesture would have made any difference, without naming any names, when some people found out there'd be no electricity involved, well, let's just say that the proposed lineup and the eventual lineup were a bit different.

I'm not criticizing the musicians who pulled out, and they were, to be fair, the minority, most reactions being, 'OK, we can do that too.' However, it does go to show how once undreamed of technology becomes the norm (did you know that cell phone separation anxiety is now a recognized medical condition?). There are people alive today who can remember when there were no microphones, when singers had to be belters and shouters, when Rudy Vallee, the first crooner, had to use a megaphone to make himself heard, when pioneer electric guitarists routinely blew the fuses at nightclubs. Of course, those people would be pretty old by now, as all this was in the 1930s, though, come to think Neo-Zydeco acts were frying the circuits of older Louisiana joints as late as the 90s, which may help explain why the subgenre didn't last.

The point, of course, is that while by far the greatest part of the history of music, predated electricity, now there are some musicians, quite possibly most musicians, who can't function without it, maybe can't imagine functioning without it, even when they pretend they're being acoustic. Among the many things I don't get is "Unplugged." Unplugged my ass. Where do all those microphone cords go?

One of the most fun conversations I had during NotSXSW, though I can't now remember with whom, was a speculation on the future development of Austin's noise ordinance, which ended up with a version so radical that no speakers would be allowed at all. Everyone, musicians and audience, would have to wear headphones and at the end of each number, the audience would press a number on their iPhone Applause app, from 1 = "I was busy texting and wasn't really listening, so I'm just being polite" to 10 = "The crowd goes virtually wild in total silence."

Rather easier to imagine, in a city where condos and lofts are springing up like mushrooms, is a scenario in which 70db's, already the limit for patio music at restaurants and cocktail bars, becomes the new norm everywhere, first outside, then inside. Just as Nashville has been dubbed 'The Used Tour Bus Capital of The World,' Austin could become 'The Surplus PA Capital of The World,' and the stock answer to the question, "Where did you live before you moved here?"

JC

MY NotSXSW/SXG&S

Every year, I devote much of the April issue to looking back on NotSXSW, the highs, the lows, the thrills, the spills, using a trusted band of musicians, DJs, other music writers and 3CM subscribers/readers. Plus, of course, I include my own rundown, these being my marbles we're playing with. However, last year, I never did find space for my own ramblings until months later when NotSXSW was but a distant memory. So this time, I'm giving us—Jane Clarke of Amelia's, Nancy Morgan of Giddy Ups and myself at G&S—plenty of space.

So, I have a few notebook pages covered in all but illegible scrawls. Let's start with my biggest moment, being handed a brown paper bag containing a sealed copy of **Blaze Foley**, aka The Vital album, aka The Muscle Shoals album, the 1984 LP of which most copies and the masters were seized by the Feds as being related to drug dealing. This was almost unimaginably generous on the part of the donor, whose name I have to withhold. Incidentally, the bass player is credited as Gurf Morelix [sic].

BettySoo, who gallantly opened the whole shebang, told us that Morlix's home is an 'Indigo Girls-free zone,' "You're not even allowed to have an Indigo Girls album in your car in the driveway." Not sure there's enough room on our door to list all the Free Zones that would apply at Chez Conquest/Thompson. I feel a bit bad about giving Best Song to a cover, but BettySoo's version of Jo Carol Pierce's *Loose Diamond* was utterly sensational.

I took more chances than usual this year but they all paid off. I'm giving New (To Me) & Wonderful to The Sweetback Sisters by a nose over The Carper Family, Andy Friedman, Mare Wakefield, The Far West and JP Harris & The Tough Choices.

Most Valuable Player looked like a shoo-in for Eric Taylor's guitarist Marco 'Python' Fechio, who was outstanding in an event that featured many great guitar players, but it got snatched away by the incredible Todd Reynolds, who sat in with fellow New Yorker Dayna Kurtz. As Debra Lou remarked, "He's ruined other violinists for me." I mentioned last month that Kurtz is Marvin Dykhu's only Must See, but I later found out that Jimmy LaFave is of the same mind. I've been listening to and writing about Kurtz for almost twenty years and the limits to her talent are still over the horizon. Measuring degrees of attentiveness is pretty subjective, but Kurtz had one clear rival for dominating a room as a solo act—John Fullbright (of whom more next month).

At one point, Susan Lindfors Taylor remarked that Eric Taylor's co-bill set seemed to be "snake bit." It started out as a reunion of Taylor, Michael Weston King & Troy Campbell, but King couldn't make it and Campbell has throat problems, so it became Taylor & Amy Speace, but she had a family crisis and cancelled her Austin trip. Then it morphed into Taylor, Wyckham Porteous & Lisa Morales, but, at the last minute, Porteous had to cancel. Turned out just fine in the end, as Taylor & Morales. Lisa Morales played one set with a substitute for her husband David Spencer because it's cheaper to hire a guitarist than a babysitter. Strange but true, perhaps only in Austin.

Other notable combos were Carrie Rodriguez reunited with Chip Taylor, who packed the joint, Lydia Loveless joining her guitarist Todd May's solo show, Amanda Shires with Rod Picott and Rod Picott with Amanda Shires (they're not doing the duo thing these days, so a nice surprise). In a crowded field, Shires walked off with Best Boots (Cobra Rock).

While I appreciated everybody—when I sent out a Thank You email, I had 84 contacts alone, so something like three times that number actually performed—I have to give special thanks to Charlie Faye (with Will Sexton) and Paula Held (with Andrew Hardin) who stepped up to fill last minute cancellations. Sadly, we lost Jo Carol Pierce because David Halley, her guitarist, had to be in Lubbock for his father's memorial service. Also special thanks to Alexis Marceaux & Sam Craft of Susan Cowsill's band, who filled in for a while because Music Fog, who'd promised to deliver Susan on time, were, predictably, already running late at 1.45. At the end of a marvelous set, Susan claimed we were the best participatory audience ever for *The Rain, The Park & Other Things* (aka The Flower Girl), but I suspect she tells everyone that.

Hardest Working Player In Show Biz went to upright bassplayer of choice David Carroll with 20 NotSXSW gigs, tying with fiddler Beth Chrisman of The Carper Family, who last year beat the previous known record, Kevin Smith's 19. I think Freddie Krc, who once played drums for eight gigs in one day, can probably claim a record there.

A cryptic note had me stumped for a while, but then I remembered the context, someone remarking about some songwriter (I really have to keep better notes), "He could drink alphabet soup and shit better lyrics than most people."

Standing outside G&S, it occurred to me that when I first arrived in Austin, I had no reason, except the HEB at South Congress, to go south of Oltorf and now I only go north of Oltorf when I have absolutely no choice.

JC

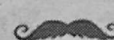


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11th, Cleve & Sweet Mary, 7pm
The Peacemakers, 10pm
12th, Freddie Krc, 7pm
13th, Switch Blade, 10pm
18th, Floyd Domino, 7pm
The Peacemakers, 10pm

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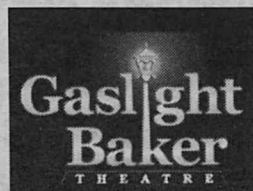
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- 1st Jules Verne Allen • 1883 Waxahachie, TX
Lucille Bogan • 1897 Amory, MS
Bob Nolan • 1908 New Brunswick, Canada
Dao Strom • 1973 Saigon, Vietnam
Jim Ed Brown • 1934 Sparkman, AR
Jesse Stone † 1999
- 2nd Emmylou Harris • 1947 Birmingham, AL
- 3rd Dooley Wilson • 1894 Tyler, TX
Don Gibson • 1928 Shelby, NC
Richard Thompson • 1949 London, UK
Calvin Russell † 2011
- 4th Al Dexter • 1905 Jacksonville, TX
Muddy Waters • 1915 Rolling Fork, MS
Red Sovine † 1980
- 5th Lord Buckley • 1906 Stockton, CA
Cowboy Jack Clement • 1931 Whitehaven, TN
- 6th Vernon Dalhart • 1883 Jefferson, TX
Big Walter Horton • 1917 Horn Lake, MS
Merle Haggard • 1937 Bakersfield, CA
Jim Stringer • 1948 Fort Scott, KS
Eilen Jewell • 1979 Boise, ID
- 6th Tammy Wynette † 1998
- 7th Leon 'Pappy' Selph • 1914 Houston, TX
Billie Holiday • 1915 Baltimore, MD
Bobby Bare • 1935 Ironton, OH
Henry Glover † 1991
- 8th Santiago Jimenez Jr • 1944 San Antonio, TX
Phil Ochs † 1976
Laura Nyro † 1997
- 9th Mance Lipscomb • 1895 Brazos Co, TX
Carl Perkins • 1932 Tiptonville, TN
Kay Adams • 1941 Knox City, TX
Christina Marrs • 1975 Houston, TX
- 10th Weldon Myrick • 1938 Jayton, TX
Jesse Taylor • 1950 Lubbock, TX
Chuck Willis † 1958
- 11th Scott Joplin † 1917
- 13th Cosimo Matassa • 1926 New Orleans, LA
Lowell George • 1945 Arlington, VA
Johnny Dollar † 1986
- 14th DL Menard • 1932 Erath, LA
Buddy Knox • 1933 Happy, TX
Loretta Lynn • 1935 Butcher Hollow, KY
Sammy Price † 1992
- 15th Bessie Smith • 1894 Chattanooga, TN
Bob Luman • 1937 Blackjack, TX
Dave Edmunds • 1944 Cardiff, UK
Rose Maddox † 1998
Ray Condo † 2004
- 16th John Delafosse • 1939 Duralde, LA
- 17th Freddie Steady Krc • 1954 LaPorte, TX
Eddie Cochran † 1960
Hank Penny † 1992
Chris Gaffney † 2008
- 18th Gatemouth Brown • 1924 Vinton, LA
Glen D Hardin • 1939 Ropesville, TX
Denice Franke • 1959 Dallas, TX
Milton Brown † 1936
- 19th Dar Williams • 1967 Mount Kisco, NY

- Clifford Scott † 1993
- 20th Ray Campi • 1934 New York City, NY
- 21st Dorothy Shay • 1921 Jacksonville, FL
Ira Louvin • 1924 Rainesville, AL
Carl Belew • 1931 Salina, OK
Ronny Elliott • 1947 Birmingham, AL
Glen Clark • 1948 Fort Worth, TX
Sandy Denny † 1978
- 22nd Gabby Pahinui • 1921 Kaka'ako, HA
- 23rd Roy Orbison • 1936 Vernon, TX
Ray Peterson • 1939 Denton, TX
Ocie Stockard † 1988
- 24th George Tomsco • 1940 Raton, NM
Huey P Meaux † 2011
Huey 'Piano' Smith † 2011
- 25th Cliff Bruner • 1915 Texas City, TX
Don Santiago Jimenez • 1913 San Antonio, TX
Jerry Leiber • 1933 Baltimore, MD
Vin Bruce • 1932 Cut Off, LA
Barbara Pittman • 1943 Memphis, TN
- 26th Roy Perkins • 1935 Lafayette, LA
Duane Eddy • 1938 Corning, NY
Monte Warden • 1967 Houston, TX
Rebekah Pulley • 1971 Anchorage, AK
- 28th DP 'Dad' Carter † 1963
- 29th Carl Gardner • 1928 Tyler, TX
Eddie Noack • 1930 Houston, TX
Hasil Adkins • 1939 Madison, WV
Keith Ferguson † 1997
- 30th Johnny Horton • 1929 Tyler, TX
Bobby Marchan • 1930 Youngstown, OH
Willie Nelson • 1933 Fort Worth, TX
Muddy Waters † 1983

Threadgill's World HQ

301 W Riverside

- 6th Merele Haggard's Birthday Party
- 7th Jimmy LaFave + Michael Fracasso
- 8th Jon Emery's Flaming Angels, 11am
Brian Kalinec, 8pm
- 9th Jenny Reynolds, Nathan Hamilton, Noelle Hampton
- 10th Michael Fracasso + Bob Cheevers
- 13th Hector Ward & The Big Time
- 14th South Austin Moonlighters
- 18th Jess Klein + John Fullbright
- 20th Mingo Fishtrap
- 21st Seth Walker
- 22nd Bells Of Joy, 11am
- 27th Slaid Cleaves
- 28th Eighty Sixxed
- 29 Gospel Silvertones, 11am

Old #1

6416 North Lamar

- 4th, Tony Redman
- 11th Noel McKay
- 15th Hank & Shaidri Alrich, 11am
- 18th Brennan Leigh & Noel McKay
- 22nd Bee Creek Boys, 11am
- 25th Hank & Shaidri Alrich
- 29th Blacktop Band, 11am

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